

Gad's Hill School

Allergy Policy

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NEXT POLICY REVIEW: September 2027
REVIEW SCHEDULE: Annual
STAFF RESPONSIBLE: **Headmaster / School Nurse**
GOVERNOR RESPONSIBLE: Chair of Safeguarding Committee

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1. Purpose and Statutory Basis

This Allergy Policy sets out how Gad's Hill School identifies, supports and safeguards pupils with allergies - particularly life-threatening allergies - across the School. It forms part of our statutory duty under section 100 of the Children and Families Act 2014 to support pupils with medical conditions and reflects the DfE's draft statutory guidance on supporting children and young people with medical conditions and allergy (2026).

The policy also responds to new national requirements that schools must:

- Have a separate, published allergy policy
- Provide allergy awareness training for staff
- Hold spare adrenaline auto-injectors (AAIs)
- Strengthen incident reporting and lessons learned.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the *Medical Treatment and First Aid Policy*.

2. Principles

Gad's Hill School is committed to:

- Keeping pupils with allergies safe, included and supported in all areas of school life.
- Ensuring robust risk reduction, clear communication and competent emergency response.
- Providing a consistent and transparent system for identifying and managing allergies.
- Ensuring pupils do not face discrimination under the Equality Act.

The School recognises that medical conditions, including severe allergies and repeated allergy-related incidents, may become safeguarding concerns in some circumstances and will be managed in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy where appropriate.

2.1. Inclusivity

All children, including those with medical conditions, should be able to attend regularly, be safe, feel welcome and enjoy school.

For that reason, Gad's Hill School will:

- Ensure allergy-related needs never prevent educational access.
- Ensure pupils with allergies can take part in all cultural, celebratory, curriculum and social events with adjustments.

- Avoid unnecessary exclusion (e.g., segregated seating, removing children from activities).
- Ensure reasonable adjustments that support dignity, privacy, and normality for children with allergies.
- Support emotional wellbeing after incidents.

3. Identification of Pupils with Allergies

3.1. Parental Responsibility

Parents must inform the School Nurse of any diagnosed allergy as soon as possible. Concerns include:

- New diagnosis
- Updated specialist advice
- Prescription of a Jext/EpiPen/other AAI

Parents must keep the School updated even when a pupil's condition changes mid-year.

3.2. School Systems for Identification

Once information is received, the School Nurse will update:

- The pupil's ISAMS medical record
- The Medical & Welfare Monitor List
- The care plan (IHP) where relevant
- The dietary/allergy list for the catering team (including pupil photographs)

All allergy information is shared with relevant staff on a need-to-know, safeguarding-appropriate basis.

3.3. Staff and Visitors with Allergies

Staff and regular visitors are encouraged to inform the School of any severe allergy that may require emergency treatment while on site. Where appropriate, arrangements will be discussed to support safe participation in school activities and emergency response planning.

3.4. Transition Between Settings

When pupils join or leave the School, relevant allergy information, healthcare plans and emergency arrangements will be shared appropriately and securely with parents and receiving settings in accordance with data protection requirements.

4. Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)

Pupils with a severe allergy (e.g., requiring AAIs) will have an IHP that includes:

- Clear diagnosis and medical evidence
- Trigger information
- Early symptoms
- Emergency steps
- Location of pupil-held AAIs
- Staff responsibilities
- Permissions to administer medication
- Emergency contact details

IHPs are reviewed at least annually, following any incident, or in line with updated Government guidance.

Where a pupil has a diagnosed allergy that places them at risk of anaphylaxis, the School will also retain an Allergy Action Plan, normally based on a recognised clinical template such as the BSACI Allergy Action Plan. These plans will be shared with relevant staff and reviewed alongside the pupil's Individual Healthcare Plan.

5. Allergy Risk Reduction Measures

5.1. Traffic Light Tray System

This is used throughout Lower and Upper School:

Red – Nuts
Orange- Other allergies
Yellow – Dairy/egg
Green –Gluten
Blue - Shellfish/fish

The tray colour appears next to each pupil's name on dietary lists to prompt catering staff to double-check allergy requirements.

Children attending school for Taster/Assessment Days who are not yet on roll but who have allergies must be individually identified to the Catering Team when receiving tuck or lunch.

5.2. Catering Team Protocols

Catering staff:

- Access daily allergy lists with photographs.
- Check the tray colour every time a pupil is served.
- Follow menu labelling for all 14 major allergens.
- Communicate with the School Nurse when uncertain.

5.3. Nut Policy and Supplier Changes

The School:

- Does not knowingly serve foods containing nuts as an ingredient.
- Cannot guarantee a nut-free environment due to industry-wide “may contain nuts” labelling.
- Requests that parents do not send nuts in packed lunches or snacks.
- Ensures parents understand that any food served may contain traces, reflecting supplier changes.

5.4. Dining Hall Arrangements

- Teaching or Teaching Assistant staff supervise lunch sittings.
- Kindergarten pupils are supported by teachers/assistants aware of all allergies. For pupils within EYFS provision, arrangements will reflect the requirements of the EYFS Statutory Framework, including appropriate supervision while eating, communication of dietary requirements and allergen management procedures.

6. Food Prepared Off-Site and Food Provided by Third Parties

6.1. Purpose

To minimise the risk of allergen exposure and food safety incidents, Gad’s Hill School maintains strict controls over food offered to pupils during the school day. This applies to all food consumed on site or during school-led activities, whether routine or celebratory.

This approach ensures that pupils with food allergies and dietary requirements are fully included and safeguarded, and that the School can maintain appropriate oversight of ingredients, preparation methods and allergen controls.

6.2. General Principle

As a default position, food and drink provided to pupils during the school day must be prepared, handled and served by the School's Catering Team or the Food and Nutrition Department, where staff are trained in allergen management, ingredient verification and food safety procedures.

Food prepared off-site in domestic kitchens or by third parties must not ordinarily be brought into school for consumption by pupils.

6.3. Applications of this Principle

This policy applies to, but is not limited to, the following situations:

6.3.1. Birthdays and Personal Celebrations

Cakes, sweets or other food items prepared at home must not be brought into school by pupils for birthday celebrations or similar personal events.

Birthdays will continue to be recognised and celebrated within school life, in line with this policy and the School's inclusive approach.

6.3.2. Cultural and Community Events (Including Culture Day)

Gad's Hill School values and actively promotes cultural education and celebration as an integral part of pupils' social, moral and cultural development.

To ensure these events remain safe and inclusive food prepared by parents or other third parties off-site must not be brought onto school premises for consumption by pupils, including home-cooked cultural dishes

For events such as Culture Day:

- the School will work with the Catering Team to prepare a culturally relevant tasting menu, inspired by the cuisines and traditions being celebrated
- all food provided will follow established allergen-management and food safety protocols
- culturally significant learning will also be supported through non-food activities, such as traditional dress, music, storytelling, artefacts, presentations or demonstrations.

This approach enables all pupils, including those with severe allergies, to participate fully without increased medical risk.

6.3.3. Rewards, Treats and Gifts

Food items (including sweets or chocolate) must not be used as ad-hoc rewards or gifts by staff, visitors, parents or the Friends.

Any food-based rewards or gifts must be agreed with a member of the senior leadership team.

6.4. Exceptional Circumstances

In limited circumstances, external food provision may be permitted only with prior approval, where:

- the food forms a clear educational, curricular or event-specific purpose
- the School has direct oversight of ingredient information and allergen content
- the School Nurse and Catering Team have assessed and approved allergen risk
- appropriate safe alternatives are provided for pupils with dietary requirements
- supervision and distribution arrangements are agreed in advance.

No external food may be distributed without explicit agreement from the senior leadership team.

7. Storage and Access to Emergency Medication (AAIs)

7.1. Spare AAIs

Spare adrenaline auto-injectors are stored in:

- Lower School Reception
- Gad's Hill Place Staff Room

Spare AAIs are clearly labelled, unlocked, and known to all staff.

7.2. Pupil Held AAIs

Pupils with prescribed AAIs must carry them at all times:

- In a school-provided AAI bag, or
- In their blazer pocket, depending on age and parental preference.

Staff must ensure these are taken:

- To lessons
- To PE
- Outside during breaks where needed
- On all school trips

7.3. Staff Access

All staff are trained and authorised to administer AAIs in an emergency.

8. Training

8.1. Core Training

All staff receive annual anaphylaxis training, fulfilling new DfE expectations for whole-school allergy awareness.

8.2. First Aid Capacity

A high proportion of staff hold:

- Emergency First Aid at Work (EFAW), *or*
- Paediatric First Aid

8.3. Specialist Responsibilities

- The School Nurse leads medical response
- Staff supervising lunch, leading educational visits activities or organising food-related activities must review relevant allergy lists

8.4. Pupil Awareness

The School will provide age-appropriate education to pupils about allergies, inclusion, allergen awareness and how to seek help in an emergency. This will form part of wider health education, safeguarding and pastoral provision.

9. Incidents

9.1. Response to an Incident

1. Administer AAI immediately (staff or self-administration).
2. Call 999 and state “anaphylaxis”.
3. Contact parents as soon as the child is stable.
4. Use a second AAI if symptoms persist after 5 minutes.
5. Stay with the pupil and monitor airway, breathing and circulation.

6. School Nurse leads where available; otherwise the nearest trained first-aider acts.

9.2. Incident Reporting, Near Misses and Lessons Learned

In line with strengthened national expectations, the School recognises that all allergy-related incidents - whether serious incidents requiring clinical intervention or near misses - provide critical opportunities for learning and continuous improvement.

When an allergic reaction or suspected exposure occurs, staff must act without delay to secure the pupil's safety and ensure appropriate medical treatment. Following the administration of emergency medication and the summoning of emergency services where required, staff must promptly record a factual, chronological account of events.

This account should include the circumstances leading up to the incident, the nature of the exposure, the symptoms observed, any interventions made (including times AAls were administered), and the pupil's response to treatment.

Near misses - events where an allergic reaction did not occur but could have, such as a pupil being offered an unsafe food item or an error in ingredient verification - must also be documented. Recording near misses allows the School to identify patterns, strengthen preventative measures and avoid repetition of potentially dangerous oversights. All staff involved in food handling, supervision, or event organisation are responsible for reporting such occurrences to the School Nurse or a member of the Senior Leadership Team as soon as possible.

Allergic reactions and their treatment will be recorded in the accident book. All allergic reactions **and** near misses must be reported to the Headmaster, who will record them in the Allergy Incidents and Near Misses Log on the SIS.

Every reported incident or near miss will trigger a structured internal review. The School Nurse and Headmaster will jointly examine the report to identify contributing factors, procedural weaknesses, communication failures or environmental risks. This review may also examine staff training needs, catering processes, event planning protocols or the implementation of Individual Healthcare Plans. Where appropriate, findings may result in amendments to school policies, targeted staff retraining, updated risk assessments or changes to operational practices.

The School is committed to learning transparently from all incidents. Outcomes of reviews will be logged and monitored, and governors will be informed of trends and significant events as part of their oversight responsibilities. Parents will be kept fully informed following any incident or near miss involving their child, both to ensure continuity of care and to support emotional reassurance. Following a significant allergic reaction, the School will consider whether pastoral, emotional or wellbeing support is required for the pupil, family or staff involved.

Where appropriate, the School will seek advice from healthcare professionals, report incidents to relevant authorities and comply with any statutory reporting requirements.

The Governing Body will receive periodic updates regarding significant incidents, training compliance, emerging risks and the effectiveness of the School's allergy management arrangements.

10. Educational Visits and Off-Site Activities

Leaders of educational visits are required to create medical lists of all pupils participating. This list must identify all children with allergies. Care plans must be reviewed where relevant and copies of the care plan must be available to staff accompanying the visit.

The school maintains a list of High Risk Pupils for educational visits. When these children are participating in an off-site visit, they must always be referred to specifically in a risk assessment.

Trip leaders carry:

- Pupil-held AAIs
- Health Care plans
- Allergy lists

Catering arrangements on visits must follow the same checks as in school. Remote environments (e.g., woods, sports venues) should be risk assessed for response time.